



SAQ-Adult Probation III



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Scale Interpretation SAQ-Adult Probation III

Scale Description

Scale Interpretation

Test Features

Applications

- Adult probationer (male & female) assessment.
- Probation departments and court-related assessment settings.
- Help determine probationer risk, establish levels of probation and ascertain needs.
- Substance (alcohol and other drugs) abuse intake screening.
- Violence (Lethality) assessment.
- Helps in the identification of appropriate intervention, counseling and treatment alternatives.

The SAQ-Adult Probation III is an automated (computer scored) adult (male & female) assessment instrument or test. It has 149 items and takes 30 minutes to complete. The SAQ-Adult Probation III has 7 measures (scales). The SAQ-Adult Probation III is used in many probation departments in the United States. It has been standardized and normed on over 100,000 probationers and is appropriate for misdemeanor and felony probationer assessment.

Seven SAQ-Adult Probation III Scale (measures)

1. **Truthfulness Scale** determines how honest the client was while completing the test. This scale identifies defensiveness, problem minimization and faking.
2. **Alcohol Scale** measures the severity of alcohol abuse and related problems. Alcohol refers to beer, wine and other liquor. Alcohol is a legal or licit substance.
3. **Drugs Scale** measures illicit drug use and related problems. Drugs refer to marijuana, crack, cocaine, ecstasy, barbiturates, amphetamines and heroin. The Drugs Scale is independent of the Alcohol Scale.
4. **Violence (Lethality) Scale** measures the use of force to injure, damage or destroy. It identifies people who are a danger to themselves or others. Violence incorporates both physical and emotional abuse.
5. **Antisocial Scale** measures aggressive, impulsive and sometimes violent behavior that opposes society and moral codes. This behavior includes socially destructive and antisocial acts characterized by a lack of responsibility, poor judgment and impaired moral values.
6. **Aggressiveness Scale** measures strong self-assertiveness, social dominance and a tendency toward hostility. These individuals can be persistent and verbally or physically assaultive. They typically lack empathy.
7. **Stress Coping Abilities Scale** measures one's ability to cope effectively with tension, stress and pressure. Stress exacerbates emotional and mental health symptoms. This is a non-introversive way to screen the presence of serious mental health problems.

More than just another alcohol or drug test. In addition to alcohol and drugs the SAQ-Adult Probation III assesses other important areas of inquiry like truthfulness, violence proneness, antisocial attitudes, aggressiveness and stress coping abilities. This test is specifically designed for probationer (male and female) assessment, consequently it measures behaviors missed by many other tests.

The SAQ-Adult Probation III measures attitudes and behaviors that combine into a probationer profile. Paper-pencil test administration takes 25 to 30 minutes and tests are computer scored on-site with reports printed within 2 ½ minutes.

Interpretation

This test interpretation is provided as a ready reference to augment this dialogue. There are several levels of interpretation ranging from viewing the SAQ-Adult Probation III as a self-report to interpreting scale elevation and scale inter-relationships.

The following table is a starting point for interpreting SAQ-Adult Probation III scale scores.

SCALE RANGES		
Risk Category	Risk Range Percentile	Total Percentage
Low Risk	0 - 39%	39%
Medium Risk	40 - 69%	30%
Problem Risk	70 - 89%	20%
Severe Problem	90 - 100%	11%

A problem is not identified until a scale score is at the 70th percentile or higher. **Elevated scale scores** refer to percentile scores that are at or above the 70th percentile. **Severe problems** are identified by scale scores at or above the 90th percentile. Severe problems represent the highest 11 percent of probationers evaluated with the SAQ-Adult Probation III, which has been normed on thousands of probationers. And this normative sample continues to expand with each test that is administered.

SCALE INTERPRETATION

1. Truthfulness Scale: Measures how truthful the probationer was while completing the test. It identifies guarded and defensive probationers who attempt to fake good. Truthfulness Scale scores in the 70 to 89th percentile range are accurate. Truthfulness Scale scores at or above the 90th percentile mean that all SAQ-Adult Probation III scales are inaccurate (invalid) because the probationer was overly guarded, read things into test items that aren't there, was minimizing problems or was caught faking answers. Probationers with reading impairments might also score in this 90 to 100th percentile scoring range.

If not consciously deceptive, probationers with elevated Truthfulness Scale scores are uncooperative, fail to understand test items or have a need to appear in a good light. The Truthfulness Scale is important because it shows whether-or-not the probationer answered test items honestly. **Truthfulness Scale scores at or below the 89th percentile indicate that all other scale scores are accurate.** One of the first things to check when reviewing an SAQ-Adult Probation III report is the Truthfulness Scale score.

2. Violence (Lethality) Scale: Identifies probationers that are dangerous to themselves and others. Violence is defined as the expression of rage and hostility through physical force. Violence is aggression in its most extreme and unacceptable form. Elevated

scorers can be demanding, sensitive to perceived criticism and are insightful about how they express their anger/hostility. **Severe problem scorers should not be ignored as they are threatening and very dangerous.**

A particularly unstable and perilous situation involves an elevated Violence Scale score with an elevated Antisocial, Alcohol or Drugs Scale score. Substance (alcohol or other drugs) abuse and antisocial attitudes can contribute to a person's dangerousness. **The more of these scales that are elevated with an elevated Violence Scale -- the worse the prognosis.** An elevated Stress Coping Abilities Scale with an elevated Violence Scale provides insight regarding codeterminants and possible treatment recommendations. A severe problem Violence Scale score is a malignant sign with or without other scale elevations and describes a dangerous person. An elevated Violence Scale with an elevated Aggressiveness Scale score increases the probability of acting out. The Violence Scale score can be interpreted independently or in combination with other SAQ-Adult Probation III scales.

3. Antisocial Scale: Measures antisocial attitudes and behavior. Antisocial is defined as opposed to society or existing social organization and moral codes. Antisocial behavior refers to aggressive, impulsive and sometime violent actions that flout social and ethical codes as well as laws. This behavior pattern often begins with a conduct disorder involving lying, stealing, fighting, cruelty, truancy, vandalism and substance abuse. **Elevated Antisocial Scale scores are often associated with non-internalization of recognized conventions.** Many high Antisocial Scale scorers manifest a seeming inability to profit from experience.

An elevated Antisocial Scale in conjunction with an elevated Alcohol Scale, Drugs Scale or Violence Scale score would be a malignant sign prognostically. A severe problem Stress Coping Abilities scale score with an elevated severe problem Antisocial Scale suggest the possibility of a suspicious/paranoid mental health problem. And an elevated Antisocial Scale score suggests a rather negative flavor to acting out behaviors. The Antisocial Scale can be interpreted independently or in combination with other SAQ-Adult Probation III scales.

4. Aggressiveness Scale: Measures aggressive or outgoing behavior. Aggressiveness is defined as a social dominance and a tendency toward hostility. This condition is often characterized by a lack of social concern for others. Aggressive conduct disorders are characterized by persistent, domineering, punitive and even assaultive verbal or physical conduct.

An elevated Aggressiveness Scale score is indicative of increased risk-taking behavior, acting out potential and impulsiveness. Severe problem scorers represent the extreme and can constitute a subgroup of antisocial personality disorders. Characteristics include lack of social concern, disrespect of others property and deliberate annoying of others. **Severe problem scorers often cross the line between aggressive behavior and inappropriate acting out. Aggressive tendencies are particularly troublesome in people also scoring in the elevated Violence Scale range.**

An aggressive person who is also antisocial and/or manifest an elevated Violence Scale score can be particularly dangerous. Substance (alcohol and other drugs) abuse tends to magnify a person's aggressive problem tendencies. A person with a severe problem Aggressiveness Scale score becomes more bothersome or distracting with a concurrently elevated substance abuse, Antisocial Scale or Stress Coping Abilities Scale score. The Aggressiveness Scale can be interpreted independently or in combination with other SAQ-Adult Probation III scales.

5. Alcohol Scale: Measures alcohol use and the severity of abuse. Alcohol refers to beer, wine and other liquor. It is a licit substance. An elevated (70 to 89th percentile) Alcohol Scale score is indicative of an emerging drinking problem. An Alcohol Scale score in the severe problem (90 to 100th percentile) range identifies serious drinking problems.

Since a history of alcohol problems could result in an abstainer (current non-drinker) attaining a low to medium-risk score, precautions have been built into the SAQ-Adult Probation III to correctly identify "recovering alcoholics." **The probationers answer to the "recovering" question (item #149) is printed on the last page of the report for easy reference.** In addition, elevated alcohol Scale paragraphs caution staff to establish if the probationer is a recovering alcoholic.

Other Alcohol Scale items are printed as "significant items" when they are admitted to. For example: #18 (Admits has a drinking problem); #28 (In last year drinking was a problem); #44 (Admits has an alcohol problem); and #71 (Admits drinking is a serious problem).

Severely elevated Alcohol and Drugs Scale scores indicate polysubstance abuse and the highest score usually identifies the probationer's substance of choice.

Scores in the severe problem (90 to 100th percentile) range are a malignant sign. And Alcohol Scale scores in the severe problem range often magnify the behaviors associated with other elevated scale scores when the probationer has been drinking. The Alcohol Scale score can be interpreted independently or in combination with other SAQ-Adult Probation III scales.

6. Drugs Scale: Measures drug use and the severity of abuse. Drugs refer to marijuana, ice, crack, cocaine, ecstasy, amphetamines, barbiturates and heroin. An elevated (70 to 89th percentile) Drugs Scale score identifies emerging drug problems. A Drugs Scale score in the severe problem (90 to 100th percentile) range identifies established drug problems.

A history of drug-related problems (e.g., drug-related arrests, drug treatment, etc.) could result in an abstainer (current non-user) attaining a low to medium risk Drugs Scale score. For this reason precautions have been built into the SAQ-Adult Probation III to insure correct identification of "recovering" drug abusers. Many of these precautions are similar to those discussed in the previous Alcohol Scale description. **The probationer's answer to the "recovering" question (item #149) is printed on the last page of the report for easy reference.** In addition, elevated Drugs Scale paragraphs caution staff to establish if the probationer is a recovering drug abuser.

Other Drugs Scale items are printed as “significant items” when they are admitted to. For example: #47 (States still uses drugs); #63 (In last year had a drug problem); #90 (Admits to a drug problem); #101 (States is in drug treatment) and #104 (Admits is dependent on drugs).

Concurrently elevated Drugs and Alcohol Scale scores are indicative of polysubstance abuse, and the highest score usually reflects the probationer’s substance of choice.

A severe Drugs Scale score usually exacerbates or magnifies the effects associated with other elevated scores when the probationer uses drugs. A particularly dangerous situation exists when the Violence Scale score and the Drugs Scale score are in the severe problem range. Elevated Drugs Scale scores contribute to further impaired Stress Coping Abilities Scale scorers stress handling abilities. A severe problem Drugs Scale score is an even more problematic sign when any Aggressiveness, Violence or Antisocial Scales are also on the severe problem range. The Drugs Scale can be interpreted independently or in combination with other SAQ-Adult Probation III scales.

7. Stress Coping Abilities Scale: Measures one’s ability to cope effectively with tension, stress and pressure. It is now accepted that stress exacerbates symptoms of mental and emotional problems. Thus, an elevated Stress Coping Abilities Scale score in conjunction with other elevated SAQ-Adult Probation III scales helps explain the probationer’s situation. When a probationer doesn’t handle stress well, other existing problems are often exacerbated. Such problem augmentation or magnification applies to substance (alcohol and other drugs) abuse, behavioral acting out and attitudinal problems.

When a Stress Coping Abilities Scale score is in the problem (70 to 89th percentile) range the probationer would benefit from a stress management program wherein effective stress coping strategies are taught. When a Stress Coping Abilities Scale score is in the severe problem (90 to 100th percentile) range it is very likely that the probationer has a diagnosable mental health problem. In these instances referral to a certified/licensed mental health professional might be warranted for a diagnosis and treatment plan. As noted earlier, lower elevated scores suggest possible referral alternatives like stress management counseling. The Stress Coping Abilities Scale can be interpreted independently or in conjunction with other SAQ-Adult Probation III scale scores.

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In conclusion, it was noted that there are several “levels” of SAQ-Adult Probation III interpretation ranging from viewing the SAQ-Adult Probation III as a self-report to interpreting scale elevations and inter-relationships. Staff can then put SAQ-Adult Probation III test report findings within the context of the probationer’s life and corrections situation.

Unique Features

Truthfulness Scale identifies denial, problem minimization and faking. It is now clear that many probationers attempt to minimize their problems. A Truthfulness Scale is

now considered by many as a necessary component in contemporary probationer tests. The SAQ-Adult Probation III Truthfulness Scale has been validated with the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), polygraph exams, other tests, experienced staff judgment and truthfulness studies. The Truthfulness Scale has been demonstrated to be reliable, valid and accurate. In some respects the SAQ-Adult Probation III Truthfulness Scale is similar to the MMPI's L and F-Scales. It consists of a number of items that most people agree or disagree with.

Truth-Corrected Scores have proven to be very important for assessment accuracy. The proprietary truth-correction program is comparable to the MMPI K-Scale correction. The SAQ-Adult Probation III Truthfulness Scale has been correlated with the 6 other scales. The Truth-Correction equation then converts raw scores to truth-corrected scores. Truth-Corrected scores are more accurate than raw scores. Raw scores reflect what the client wants you to know. Truth-Corrected scores reveal what the client is trying to hide.

Violence (Lethality) Scale boils down to identifying people who are a danger to themselves and others. Violence is defined as "the expression of hostility and rage through physical force directed against persons or property." It is aggression in an extreme and unacceptable form, which is why Risk & Needs includes the term "lethality" in parentheses. Measuring violence enables SAQ-Adult Probation III users to identify people capable of harming themselves and others. Extremely violent (lethal) individuals score at or above the 90th percentile on the Violence (lethality) Scale and these people are dangerous. This is a very important, yet often overlooked behavior pattern.

Antisocial Scale measures the degree to which a person is opposed to society or moral codes. Antisocial tendencies refer to aggressive behavior that is either socially destructive or has socially undesirable consequences. Antisocial behavior often incorporates aggressive, impulsive and even violent actions that flout social and ethical codes such as laws. Antisocial behavior is characterized by a lack of judgment; a seeming inability to learn from experience and what used to be called sociopathic behavior. When a person manifests antisocial tendencies, they are dangerous. When a person has antisocial tendencies along with violence prone attitudes/behaviors -- that person is particularly dangerous.

Aggressiveness Scale is often defined in terms of punitive behavior. And we are familiar with the aggressive-frustration hypothesis that postulates aggressive behavior is largely a response to frustration. The Aggressiveness Scale refers to a person's ranking on an outgoing to assaultive behavior scale. High risk scorers on the Aggressiveness Scale manifest strong self-assertiveness, social dominance and a tendency toward hostility.

Stress Coping Abilities Scale measures how well the probationer handles stress, tension and pressure. How well a person manages stress can effect their adjustment and mental health. We now know that stress exacerbates emotional and mental health

problems. This scale is a non-introversive way to screen established (diagnosable) mental health problems. A probationer scoring at or above the 90th percentile on the Stress Coping Abilities Scale should be referred for a more comprehensive evaluation and diagnosis. This important area of inquiry is missed by other probationer screening tests.

More than just another alcohol or drug test. In addition to alcohol and drugs the SAQ-Adult Probation III assesses other important areas of inquiry like truthfulness, denial and faking, violence (lethality) proneness, antisocial attitudes, aggressiveness and stress coping abilities. The SAQ-Adult Probation III is specifically designed for probationer assessment. It provides the information needed for understanding probationer attitudes and behavior.

Confidentiality: Risk & Needs encourages test users to delete probationer's names from diskettes before they are returned to Behavior Data Systems. Once probationer names are deleted they are gone and cannot be retrieved. Deleting probationer names does not delete demographics or test data, which is downloaded into the SAQ-Adult Probation III database for subsequent analysis. This proprietary name deletion procedure involves a few keystrokes and insures client confidentiality. This "name deletion" procedure insures confidentiality and **compliance with HIPAA** (federal regulation 45 C.F.R. 164.501) requirements.

Test Data Input Verification allows the person that inputs test data from the answer sheet into the computer to verify the accuracy of their data input. In brief, test data is input twice and any inconsistencies between the first and second data entry are highlighted until corrected. When the first and second data entry match or are the same -- staff can continue. This proprietary Test Data Input Verification procedure is optional, yet it is strongly recommended by Behavior Data Systems.

Inventory of Scientific Findings: Much of the SAQ-Adult Probation III research has been gathered together in one document titled "SAQ: An Inventory of Scientific Findings." This document summarizes SAQ-Adult Probation III research chronologically - as the studies were completed. This innovative chronological reporting format was established largely because of the SAQ-Adult Probation III database which permits annual database analysis of all tests administered. It also allows the reader to observe the evolution of the SAQ-Adult Probation III into its current state-of-the-art position.

For more information

Some evaluators want more test-related information than others. If you want more in depth SAQ-Adult Probation III information visit **www.bdsltd.com**. Upon entering this site there are navigational links in the left margin. Click on "Tests Alphabetically Listed" and scroll down to the SAQ-Adult Probation III. Click on the tests name and you will go directly to its webpage, which contains a lot of test-related (description, unique features, research, example report and more) information.

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